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BRITISH MUSEUM.

A GUIDE

TO THE

CHINESE AND JAPANESE
ILLUSTRATED BOOKS

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A GUIDE,

ETC.



THIS Exhibition is arranged so as to show the connexion between the pictorial arts of China and Japan, and to give an opportunity of comparing the works of artists of the different Japanese schools. A comparison of the Chinese engravings in Case II. with the contents of the remaining cases is enough to show that the principle of the two arts is the same. They both have their origin in caligraphy, and this becomes obvious when we trace the close connexion which there is between the caligraphic and pictorial arts in both countries. The skill possessed by Chinese and Japanese artists in the use of the brush is acquired at the schoolboy's desk. There they are taught to write the hieroglyphic characters with correctness, certainty, and finish, and when once the power of doing this is acquired, the transition from writing the hieroglyphic character representing an object, to drawing the object itself is very slight. It is this early training in the use of the brush which enables a Chinese or Japanese artist to draw with one sweep of his hand an outline which would possibly be only arrived at by a European artist after several attempts. One of the most interesting features in the collection of the "H. B." sketches, which was exhibited in the King's Library a few years ago, was the numerous experimental lines drawn by the artist in

almost every case before he got an outline which satisfied him. Such a system of sketching is quite unheard of in the extreme East, where artists have so learned to make the hand follow the eye unhesitatingly, that they are able to sketch in their outlines with a flowing brush and the utmost precision. When this dexterity is combined with the freedom and scope given to the brush, by the fact that it is held at the end and perpendicularly, and that the hand is supported, not from the wrist, but from the elbow, it will readily be understood how much is within the power of a skilful artist to perform.

But it is not only in the caligraphic style of drawing that we see the resemblance between Chinese and Japanese art. In every school, whether of impressionists or of minute draughtsmen, the identity is equally apparent. In Case III. will be observed an engraving from a Chinese drawing of a crab, which might readily be taken for a specimen of the best style of Japanese impressionistic art; and in Case II. there is an engraving from a drawing by the Chinese Emperor Hwuy Tsung (A.D. 1101-1126), which is an admirable instance of more detailed work.

It is a fact to be noted, as showing how intimate and constant the connexion has been between Chinese and Japanese art, that in the long history of Japanese painting "each revival of the art has been the result of the appearance of renewed artistic activity in China. Precisely the same sequence is to be observed in the outbreaks of poetic fire in Japan. In each case the impetus and keynote came from China, and it was necessary that the Chinese bards should first re-string their lyres before the Japanese songsters could sound a note. So it has always

been with their paintings. The artists of the T'ang, the Sung, the Yuen, and the present dynasties gave birth to the art renaissances of the 9th, the 12th, the 15th, and the 18th centuries."¹

The history of wood engraving in Japan may be divided into two parts, namely, the period of purely religious art, and the period of book illustrations. In point of time, at least six centuries divide the commencements of these two branches of the art. Tradition attributes a very early date to an engraved block representing the god Daikoku, now to be seen at Kau-ya-san, in Kishiu; but the sharpness still preserved in the outlines precludes the possibility of its being very ancient. At the monastery of Rai-kau-shi, on Lake Biwa, however, there is a block representing Amida coming down from heaven to meet the faithful, which is dated 1017, and in a temple at Shibamata there is an engraved block representing the god Indra, which was executed by Nichiren, the founder of the Lotus-law sect of Buddhists, who died in 1282. Mention is also made in the *Adzuma Kagami* of woodcuts of the goddess Kwan-yin, which are dated 1186.²

According to Mr. Satow, the earliest example known of a Japanese illustrated book for which designs were made by a native artist is the *Ise Monogatari*, dated 1610. Printing in colours did not come into use until quite the end of the 17th century, when, as a first essay, portraits of a certain famous actor, printed in colours, were sold in the streets of Yedo for five cash apiece.³

¹ 'Blackwood's Magazine,' Feb. 1, 1887.

² Satow's paper, "On the Early History of Printing in Japan," from vol. x. of the 'Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan.'

³ Ibid.

As an introduction to the engravings, there will be found in Case I. some specimens of early printing from Jápán and China, and the exhibition begins with three of the earliest specimens of printing which are known to exist anywhere in the world. As the art came to Japan originally from China, there are no doubt specimens of printing in that country which are even earlier than these ; but antiquities are guarded more jealously by the Chinese than by the Japanese, and we may yet have to wait a long time before we succeed in gaining access to the art treasures preserved in the private museums of the Middle Kingdom. Similar remarks apply to the art of printing from movable types, of which the earliest specimen possessed by the Museum is the Chinese Encyclopædia, printed in Korea in 1337.

History tells us that the art of printing from wooden blocks was invented in China in the 6th century, and that in 593 A.D. the Emperor Wăn-li ordered the various texts which were in circulation to be collected, and engraved on wood, for the purpose of being printed and published. This, no doubt, was done, although we have no record of the works which were thus dealt with. Nor does there seem to have been any great use made of the printer's art until the time of the Sung dynasty (960-1127), when that, in common with all other arts, flourished abundantly. It was from the painters of this period that Japanese artists, such as Sesshiu, Kano-Moto-nobu, and others, derived their inspiration, and it is in the pictures of Ma Yuen, Nganhwui, the Emperor Hwui Tsung, and others, that Japanese painters, even at the present day, see the perfection of their art. It was during

this epoch, also, that movable types made of a fine and glutinous clay, were invented by a blacksmith named Pe Ching, or, according to Japanese records, by Chin Hwo. For each character Pe Ching made a type which he hardened at the fire. "He then placed an iron plate on the table, and covered it with a cement compound of resin, wax, and lime. When he wanted to print, he took an iron frame divided by perpendicular threads of the same metal, and placing it on the iron plate, ranged his types in it. The plate was then held near the fire, and, when the cement was sufficiently melted, a wooden board was pressed tightly upon it, so as to render the surface of the type perfectly even."¹

We have no record as to the date when metal type was first used in China, but we find Korean books printed as early as 1317, with movable clay or wooden type, and just a century later, we have a record of a fount of metal type having been cast to print an 'Epitome of the Eighteen Historical Records of China.' As both processes came to Korea from China it is only reasonable to suppose that metal type was used in China a century or more before its adoption in Korea. Considerable doubt exists as to the time when movable type was first introduced into Japan; but it is at least certain that "after the first invasion of Korea by the armies of Hideyoshi, in the end of the 16th century, a large quantity of Korean movable type books were brought back by one of his generals, Ukida Hideihe, which formed the model upon which the Japanese printers worked."²

¹ 'The Language and Literature of China.' 1875.

² Satow : 'History of Printing in Japan.'

Case I.—SPECIMENS OF EARLY PRINTED BOOKS FROM
JAPAN, CHINA, AND KOREA.

1. Three Buddhist Dhāraṇī, from the Chinese version of the Vimala-nirbhāsa Sūtra, printed by order of the Empress Shiyautoku during the latter half of the 8th century. It is said that over a million of these Dhāraṇī were printed, the copies being placed in small wooden toy pagodas, which, in the year 770, were distributed among the Buddhist temples in the country. Some of these pagodas, with the original Dhāraṇī, are still preserved at the monastery of Hofu-riu-zhi, in Yamato. These three copies, which are the earliest specimens of printing known to us as existing in any part of the world, were brought to England by Ernest Satow, Esq., late H.M.'s Japanese Secretary of Legation at Yedo, and were presented by him to the Trustees of the British Museum.
2. A Chinese version of the Mahāprajñāpāramitā Sūtra, printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1157.
3. The Writings of the Chinese Philosopher Lëë Yu-kow, printed in China from blocks in the 12th century.
4. A Chinese Buddhist Treatise on "the ten means of salvation," printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1248.
5. A Chinese Buddhist Treatise on the distinction of the meaning of one vehicle, in the Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra, printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1283.
6. A Chinese and Japanese Dictionary, entitled Tseu fun yun leö, printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1307.
7. A Chinese Encyclopædia, entitled Wän heen t'ung k'au, printed in Korea from movable types in A.D. 1337.
8. A Chinese version of The Sūrangama Sūtra, with a commentary in Chinese, printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1339.
9. Hwan woo pih yen tseih. A Buddhist work in Chinese, printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1341.
10. Man yō shiu, "The ten thousand leaves." A collection of Poems in Chinese, printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1353.

11. Lun yü. The discourses of Confucius in Chinese, printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1368.
12. A Chinese Buddhist "Sūtra in praise of the Pure Land," printed in Japan from blocks in A.D. 1380.
13. The Poems of Too Foo, printed in Korea from movable types in A.D. 1501.
14. Urh lun. A Chinese work on Morality, with illustrations, and with a Korean version of the text in the upper margin, printed in Korea from blocks in the 16th century.
15. Specimen of a Chinese illustration in the Imperial Encyclopædia, entitled Koo kin t'oo shoo tseih ch'ing, and consisting of 5020 volumes, printed at Peking in A.D. 1726.
16. Specimen of a Chinese illustration in a work on the nations tributary to China under the present dynasty, A.D. 1751.

Case II.—SPECIMENS OF CHINESE AND JAPANESE
ENGRAVINGS.

1. Three engravings from a Chinese work published in A.D. 1806, representing a series of stone sculptures which were executed in A.D. 147, and which still exist in the sacrificial temple of the Woo family, in the neighbourhood of the city of Kia-siang, in the province of Shan-tung. It will be observed that the arrangement of the figures in these engravings, and the figures themselves, bear a striking resemblance to those we are accustomed to see on the Assyrian and Egyptian sculptures.
2. A Chinese Print. Birds (swallows and starlings) and flowers. A.D. 1607.
3. A Chinese Print. Woman holding a rabbit in her arms, and on the opposite page a horseman fording a stream flooded by spring rains. A.D. 1607.
4. A Chinese Print. A process in the preparation of silk. A.D. 1696.
5. A Chinese Print. Figures. 18th century.
6. A Chinese Print. Groups of figures seated at meals. A.D. 1806.

7. A Chinese Print. Bamboos. On one page the bamboos are shown agitated by a high wind, and on the other motionless as in a calm. A.D. 1813.
8. A Chinese Landscape. A cliff and water, by Peen Yuen-foo. [A.D. 1815?]
9. Two Chinese Prints. Birds and flowers; one coloured. A.D. 1818.
10. A Chinese Print. A cherry-tree in flower, by Ching Seaou-ts'eaou, of the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960-1127). A.D. 1838.
11. A Japanese Coloured Print. A Chinese drawing of birds and flowers, by Tsze Shih. A.D. 1765.
12. A Japanese Print. A Chinese drawing of a man in a recumbent attitude, looking at a waterfall, by an artist of the Sung dynasty (A.D. 960-1127). A.D. 1776.
13. A Japanese Print. A drawing by the Chinese Emperor, Hwui Tsung (A.D. 1101-1126), of a hawk and a pigeon. A.D. 1791.

Case III.—SPECIMENS OF JAPANESE PRINTS OF CHINESE DRAWINGS, AND OF JAPANESE DRAWINGS OF THE CHINESE, SESSHIU, AND KANO SCHOOLS.

The CHINESE SCHOOL may be said to have been founded by Kanaoka, who rose into fame during the 9th century. After a long and careful study of the paintings of the artists of the T'ang dynasty of China, this painter produced a number of works, some of which still exist, but the greater number of which are no longer in being. Together with the style of the Chinese artists, he adopted the historical, legendary, and religious subjects which they chiefly affected. By his disciples the less ambitious subjects with which the painters of China are accustomed to occupy their pencils, such as birds, animals, and flowers, were largely treated of. Very typical representations of these branches of the art will be found in this case.

The SESSHIU SCHOOL was founded by an artist of that name, who was born in the province of Bichiu, in 1421. As a boy, he was placed under the instruction of a priest in the temple of Hōfukuji. But his heart was not in priestly avocations, and on one occasion, it is said, that when tied to a pillar of the temple for his misdeeds, he drew on the ground, using his toe for a pencil, and his tears for ink, a number of rats, with such realistic power that the priest, mistaking them for the living animals, attempted to drive them away. In later life he visited China, with the object of studying the chefs-d'œuvre of Chinese artists, and on his return he surrounded himself with a number of disciples, to whom he strove to impart some of the ideas he had received at the source of inspiration.

The KANO SCHOOL was founded by Kano Motonobu, who was born in 1477. Like all the best Japanese artists, he turned to China for his models, and is said to have especially studied the works of Ma Yuen, Muh Ki, Ngan Hwui, and others. The subjects he chose were mostly classical, but among his followers there was developed a taste for depicting the objects of nature, in which branch of art Tanyu, the fourth in descent from Motonobu, conspicuously excelled. Two engravings from paintings by this artist will be found in this case.

1. A Japanese Print of a Chinese drawing of birds and trees, by Muh Ki (12th cent.). [1800?]
2. A Japanese Print of a Chinese drawing. Insects. [1800?]
3. A Japanese Print. A Chinese drawing of a woman with a child and two dogs. A.D. 1824.
4. A Japanese Print. A Chinese impressionist drawing of a crab. A.D. 1854.

5. A Japanese Print. Chinese School. Monkeys. A.D. 1719. The long-armed monkey represented in this engraving is unknown in Japan, and is copied from Chinese pictures.
6. A Japanese Print. Magpies, by Mokiō Ken. A.D. 1752.
7. A Japanese Print. Horses, by Mokiō Ken. A.D. 1771.
8. A Japanese Print. A duck, by Bunyosai. A.D. 1779.
9. A Japanese Print. Cranes, by Roken. A.D. 1809.
10. A Japanese Print. A landscape, by Chikuto. A.D. 1813.
11. A Japanese Print. Woodpecker and flowers, by Gesshō. A.D. 1817.
12. A Japanese Print. A waterfowl, by Mokiō Ken. A.D. 1847.
13. A Japanese Print. Birds and flowers, by Baisai. A.D. 1850.
14. A Japanese Print. Cranes, by Zogetsu Sōshin. A.D. 1858.
15. A Japanese Print. A lady on a couch, by Kaisen. A.D. 1861. An admirable specimen of the caligraphic style of drawing.
16. A Japanese Print. Sesshiu School. A traveller resting, with horse fully caparisoned standing by, by Sesshiu. Died A.D. 1507. [1810?]
17. A Japanese Print. Kano School. Water birds, by Tanyu. Died A.D. 1674. A.D. 1728.
18. A Japanese Print. Figures and birds, by Shonboku. A.D. 1753.
19. A Japanese Print. Wild geese, by Tanyu. A.D. 1855.

Case IV.—SPECIMENS OF JAPANESE PRINTS OF DRAWINGS OF THE SHIJŌ, KŌRIN, AND POPULAR SCHOOLS.

The SHIJŌ SCHOOL, otherwise known as the Naturalistic School, owes its existence to Maruyama Ōkio, who was born in the province of Tsanba, in 1733. Though a

careful student of the old Chinese masters, Ōkio invented, as we are told in the *Gwajo yoriaku*, "a new style, painting birds, flowers, grasses, quadrupeds, insects, and fishes from nature. His talents were also manifested in the delineation of landscape and figures, and he was a skilful colourist; so that his fame became noised throughout the Empire, all people learned by his example, and he effected a revolution in the laws of painting in Kioto." The great object aimed at by Ōkio and his followers has been realism, and the chief characteristic of their paintings is "an easy but graceful outline, free from the arbitrary mannerisms and unmeaning elegance of some of the works of the older schools."¹

The KŌRIN SCHOOL was established by Ogata Kōrin, "a famous painter and lacquer artist of the latter part of the 17th century."² The works of this artist display great originality and vigorous drawing. A good specimen of his skill is shown in an engraving depicting the Rishi Tekkai in the act of breathing forth his inner self on its journey to the Chinese Olympus. Kōrin never had a large following. Two of his principal disciples were Ho Itsu and Kenzan, specimens of whose skill will be found in this case.

The POPULAR SCHOOL is a comparatively modern phase of Japanese art, and, as its name implies, seeks to represent the scenes, legends, and beliefs which are dear to the hearts of the people. It owes its origin to Matahei, who flourished in the latter half of the 17th century. He was followed by a number of disciples, among whom Hanabusa

¹ Anderson's Catalogue.

² Ibid.

Itcho and Hokusai stand conspicuous. As an artist in the Japanese sense, Itcho (A.D. 1651-1724) is infinitely superior to Hokusai (A.D. 1760-1849), but in wealth of imagination and fertility of genius he unquestionably has to yield the palm to his more modern rival. In Case V. a number of engravings from Hokusai's pictures have been arranged together, by an inspection of which some idea may be gained of his many-sided genius.

1. Shijō School. A lady tiring her hair, while her maid on her knees holds up a mirror to her view. A.D. 1784.
2. Shijō School. A street scene, by Nantei. A.D. 1804.
3. Shijō School. A street scene, by Nangaku. A.D. 1811.
4. Shijō School. Rabbits by moonlight, a striking and very curious effect; flowers, by Goshun. A.D. 1836.
5. Shijō School. Wild ducks on the wing; hawk and fish, by Kōchō. 1849.
6. Shijō School. Portrait of the Emperor Ts'ien, who died of grief (A.D. 941) at the destruction by fire of a palace which he had built, by Kōchō. 1850.
7. Shijō School. Landscape, by Yosai. 1852.
8. Kōrin School. Flowers, by Kenzan. 1823.
9. Kōrin School. Figure seated and engaged in devotion, with ducks in distance, by Ho Itsu. 1831.
10. Popular School. Street Jugglers, by Hanabusa Itchō. 1751.
11. Popular School. Hawk carrying away a fish, followed by the enraged owner, by Hanabusa Itchō. 1758.
12. Popular School. A landscape, by Tachibana Morikuni. 1782.
13. Popular School. The trades of Japan; the one here illustrated is that of polishing mirrors, by Tachibana no Binkō. 1784.
14. Popular School. Japanese ladies, by Kitawo Kōsuisai. 1788.
15. Popular School. A pheasant, by Tachibana Morikuni. 1790.

16. Popular School. A landscape, by Ōishi Matoro. 1828.
17. Popular School. Flowers, &c., by Keisai, together with the celebrated Kettle belonging to the Priest of the Morinji Temple, which one day when the Priest was about to hang it over the fire, suddenly put forth the head and tail of a badger. 1842.
18. Popular School. An illustration of a Buddhist saying, which may be rendered, with apologies to Pope—

“Fair tresses even elephants ensnare,
And beauty draws them with a single hair.”

(19th century.)

19. Popular School. Hawks, by Hoku-un. 1862.

Case V.—SKETCHES BY HOKUSAI; AND REPRESENTATIONS
OF THE LEGENDS OF TEKKAI AND GAMA.

Reverse.—JAPANESE PRINTS OF DRAWINGS, by Hokusai,
b. 1760—d. 1849.

1. Coloured sketches of crabs, tortoises, and other animals.
2. A roadside scene, coloured, in which travellers and itinerant vendors are listening to a man reading, while the Koshemoto, or waiting-maid, entertains a lady in the background.
3. Two views from Hokusai's celebrated work, “the hundred views of Fusiyama.” One represents a winter scene with a stork in the foreground, and the mountain in the distance; the other, a waiter at an inn removing a shutter, and showing Fusiyama to the astonished traveller.
4. Coloured sketches of men on horseback, remarkable for their life.
5. A coloured sketch of a mad woman, who, “clad in tattered finery, and happy in the delusion that she is a brilliant ornament of the Imperial Court, parades the streets with mincing steps and affected gestures, apparently filling the part to her own entire satisfaction, as well as to that of the little urchins who are bearing an old straw sandal above her head as a mocking emblem of a royal canopy.”¹

¹ Anderson's ‘Pictorial Art of Japan.’

6. Outline sketches in monochrome. One of these, a woman stooping over a basin washing her hair, is especially noticeable, though not perfect in drawing.
 7. A peacock. This sketch, though commonly attributed to Hokusai, is said to be the work of his pupil, Huku-un.
 8. A coloured sketch, representing a man and woman watching servants in a boat picking water-lilies. This sketch shows an attempt to imitate another and an older style of art. It will be observed that the figures are more elongated and formal than those commonly painted by Hokusai.
 9. A rain scene, in which the misty atmosphere, so frequently noticeable on a wet day in Japan, is admirably depicted.
 10. Two coloured sketches, one representing a shop for the sale of edible seaweed, and the other a house on an island.
 11. Three sketches. A boat, a group of wrestlers exercising their muscles, and a hawk carrying away a fish followed by the enraged owner. This is the same subject dealt with by Hanabusa Itcho, in No 11, Case IV.
 12. A highly dramatic picture, in which a man is represented murdering his guilty wife, while a female companion defiantly exposes her breast and invites him to wreak the same vengeance on her.
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1. *Obverse*.—Two engravings from drawings by the Chinese artist, Yen Hwui of the 13th century, one representing the Rishi Tekkai breathing forth his inner self on its way to the mountains of the immortal gods, and the other the Rishi Gama carrying on his shoulder a three-legged toad, and holding in his hand an apple of longevity. [1810?]
 2. An engraving from a drawing of the Tekkai incident by Chō Densu, of the Buddhist school, who flourished in the 14th century. 1720.
 3. An engraving from a drawing of the same by Riuko, of the Chinese school, who belonged to the present century.
 4. Two engravings from drawings by Watanabe Gentai

- (died 1822), of the same school, one representing Tekkai dismissing his inner self from a gourd, and the other, the Rishi Gama dancing on a three-legged toad. 1805.
5. Two engravings from drawings by Naonobu (died 1592), of the Kano school, (1) a standing figure of Tekkai, and (2) Gama dancing on a four-legged toad. 1752.
 6. Two engravings from drawings by Ogata Kōrin (died 1716), of Tekkai and Gama. It will be observed that Gama is here also holding an apple of longevity in his hand.
 7. An engraving from a drawing by Nobukatsu, of the Popular school, representing the same two Rishi. 1772.
 8. An engraving from a drawing by Toyofusa, of the Popular school, representing the Tekkai incident, with the addition that Chung Ko-laou, a brother Rishi, expresses from his gourd a horse to carry the traveller on his way to Olympus. 1774.
 9. An engraving from a drawing by Keisai (died 1824), of the Popular school, representing Gama seated, with the three-legged toad on his shoulder. 1800.

These prints are placed together to facilitate a comparison of the treatments of the same subject by artists of the several schools. According to the legend Tekkai, who was a Taoist Rishi, was able to project his inner self whither he would. On one occasion he dismissed this mysterious essence to the mountains of the immortal gods, having previously arranged that a friend should watch over his body during the seven days that it was to be bereft of its spiritual part. Unfortunately in this interval the watcher received news that his mother was seriously ill, and as the claims of filial piety plainly superseded the obligation due to Tekkai, he at once went home, taking with him the body of the Rishi. On the seventh day the spiritual essence returned to earth, and not finding its accustomed habitation on the

spot where it had shaken it off, was compelled to take refuge in the dead body of a starved toad. In several of the prints Tekkai's inner self is represented as riding off on a horse which has been projected from the gourd of Chung Ko-laou, a fellow Taouist Rishi. According to another version of the legend, the returned essence found a new home in the corpse of a starved beggar.

It will be observed that the tattered and dishevelled Rishi Gama and his three-legged toad are frequently associated with the Tekkai incident. Very little is known about Gama, and it is possible that in him and his toad we have portrayed the forms which the disembodied spirit of the Rishi is said to have taken in the two current legends.

Case XIV.—JAPANESE BLOCK-PRINTING IN COLOURS.

1. Two Views on the High Road between Yedo and Kyoto. By Hiroshiye. [1840?]
2. Ancient patterns. 1840.
3. Figures. By Hokusai. 1819-1834.
4. Flowers and birds. [1845?]
5. Garden Scene, with a glimpse of an interior. By Toyokuni. [1830?]
6. "Poems by a hundred authoresses." Illustrated by Katsugama Yōsuke. 1775.
7. "A hundred Views of Yedo." [1840?]
8. Figures. By Hokusai. 1819-1834.
9. Birds and flowers. [1845?]

